



Alcopops are sweet beverages containing alcohol. Marketed to youth. Learn more [click here](#)

Selling to Minors is not Minor

Underage Drinking

Underage drinking is when anyone under the minimum legal drinking age of 21 drinks alcohol. Underage drinking is a risk that attracts many developing adolescents and teens. When young people try alcohol, they often don't realize the damaging effects drinking can have on their own lives, their families, and their communities.

Aside from being illegal, this is a widespread public health problem that poses many risks.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

Underage drinking is widespread

- In 2009, about 10.4 million young people between ages 12 and 20 drank more than "just a few sips" of alcohol.
- As kids get older, they drink more. By age 15, half of teens have had at least one drink. By age 18, more than 70% of teens have had at least one drink.

Young people drink a lot

- Young people drink less often than adults, but when they do drink, they drink more than adults.
- On average, young people have about 5 drinks on a single occasion, which can be considered binge drinking.

Underage drinking risks include:

- **Death** - 5,000 people under age 21 die each year from alcohol-related car crashes, homicides, suicides, alcohol poisoning, and other injuries such as falls, burns, and drowning.
- **Serious injuries** - More than 190,000 people under age 21 visited an emergency room for alcohol-related injuries in 2008 alone.
- **Impaired judgment** - Drinking can cause kids to make poor decisions, which can then result in risky behavior like drinking and driving, sexual activity, or violence.
- **Increased risk for physical and sexual assault** - Youth who drink are more likely to carry out or be the victim of a physical or sexual assault.
- **Brain development problems** - Research shows that brain development continues well into a person's twenties. Alcohol can affect this development, and contribute to a range of problems.

Here's how you can recognize the signs of underage drinking:

Anyone who interacts with young people should pay close attention to the warning signs that may indicate underage drinking. Some of these warning signs include:

- Academic and/or behavioral problems in school
- Changing groups of friends
- Less interest in activities and/or appearance
- Finding alcohol among a young person's things or smelling alcohol on their breath
- Slurred speech
- Coordination problems
- Memory and/or concentration problems



Adults lock up and or monitor your alcohol  Talk It Up. Lock It Up!™ [Sign the pledge](#)

Together for Resilient Youth - Wanda Boone, Executive Director

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Mission: TRY prevents substance abuse by reducing community risk factors through advocacy, education, policy change, mobilization and action.

